



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
West Coast Region  
1201 NE Lloyd Boulevard, Suite 1100  
PORTLAND, OREGON 97232

July 9, 2019

Mr. Phil Anderson, Chair  
Pacific Fishery Management Council  
7700 NE Ambassador Place  
Portland, OR 97220

Dear Mr. Anderson:

On June 26, 2019, the NOAA Assistant Administrator for Fisheries determined that the northern subpopulation of Pacific sardine (hereafter Pacific sardine) is *overfished*, based on the best scientific information available.

The overfished status determination criteria (SDC) for Pacific sardine, established in 1999 in Amendment 8 to the Coastal Pelagic Species Fishery Management Plan, is a minimum stock size threshold (MSST) of 50,000 metric tons (mt). In April 2019, staff from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southwest Fisheries Science Center completed a draft Pacific sardine assessment titled, *Assessment of the Pacific Sardine Resource in 2019 for U.S. Management in 2019-2020*. This 2019 assessment used data through 2018 and a Stock Synthesis model (version 3.24aa) and estimated that the Pacific sardine stock size on July 1, 2019, would be 27,547 mt. This supports a determination that the Pacific sardine stock is overfished because the estimated stock size is less than its MSST (50,000 mt). This 2019 stock assessment was reviewed by the Coastal Pelagic Species subcommittee of the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) on March 28, 2019, and endorsed by the full SSC and the full Council on April 10, 2019. The 2019 stock assessment provides information consistent with the best scientific information process for supporting the status of this stock.

Within two years after the date of this notification letter, the Council must prepare and implement a rebuilding plan pursuant to the requirements of Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act section 304(e). In order to meet this deadline, Council actions should be submitted to NMFS within 15 months of this notification to ensure sufficient time for the Secretary of Commerce to implement the measures, if approved.

If you have questions, please contact Ryan Wulff, Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS West Coast Region, at 916-930-3733.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barry A. Thom".

Barry A. Thom  
Regional Administrator

cc: Chuck Tracy, Executive Director, Pacific Fishery Management Council  
Ryan Wulff, Assistant Regional Administrator for Sustainable Fisheries, NMFS West Coast Region

